



# "Making it Happen Through Operational Contracting"

## 61st CONS Newsletter - Winter 2003

Season's Greetings!! We have provided information on some topics we thought might interest you. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact the POCs listed throughout the publication. Thanks!!

### DID YOU KNOW?

Purchase of personal hygiene items, such as Kleenex, is a personal expense and should not be purchased with appropriated funds. The only exception is in the Child Care Center where the occupants, children, are generally not capable of practicing the level of personal hygiene one expects of adults. Adults are expected to provide at their own expense the necessary material, no matter where they are, to cope with personal hygiene issues, whether on a bus, at a shopping mall, or in their car.

Toilet tissue and soap have long been accepted as hygiene materials that Government and business provide their employees and customers in a room set aside for their use. The use of "hygiene" as a justification to purchase some items can be carried to a ridiculous point. Should the government also provide nail files to clean one's fingernails or cough medicine for people who have colds so they don't spread their germs? The Government thinks not!!

In short, kleenex/tissues, along with other such items, are a personal expense and are the responsibility of the employee to purchase. Appropriated funds shall NOT be used for such purposes.

### BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENTS<sup>i</sup>

The 61 Contracting Squadron (CONS) possesses a variety of options for satisfying your procurement needs. In addition to the Government-Wide Purchase Card (GPC) and AF Form 9, a lesser-known method of purchasing is the blanket purchase agreement (BPA). A BPA is a simplified method of filling anticipated *repetitive* needs for supplies or services by establishing "charge accounts" with qualified vendors. Individual purchases under a BPA cannot exceed the dollar limitation for simplified acquisitions currently \$100,000 or the amount stated in the BPA, whichever is less. The existence of a BPA does not justify purchasing from only one

source or splitting requirements to stay under the delegated purchasing authority.

All that is required to establish a BPA with a local vendor is a letter. The letter should include the name and address of the suggested vendors with whom you wish to establish the agreement. It should also include the estimated monthly ordering amount to be purchased, the call limitation per order (not to exceed \$25,000) and an attached list of personnel authorized to place calls against the BPA. The attached list shall contain the name, rank and duty title of each individual. Be sure to include a list of items you wish to purchase under the BPA. The contractor will submit a firm-fixed price list to the contracting officer for approval for a fixed period of time. The approved price lists will be distributed to the requesting organization. Prior to using the BPA, a funding document AF form 9 or AF Form 616 must be established with the accounting and finance office. Additionally, the BPA can be used in conjunction with the GPC.

For additional information, contact Ms. Audrey Campbell at 363-5088

### CONTRACT REPAIR SERVICES

Do you know what to do if a vital piece of equipment is in need of repair? Within each organization, obtaining repair services will normally be the responsibility of the equipment custodian. The specific responsibilities of the equipment custodian are spelled out in AFR 67-23, however the following is a brief synopsis of those duties as they relate to obtaining contract repair services.

After identifying that an item is in need of repair, the first thing you must determine is if the item is covered under an existing maintenance agreement. If it is, you only need to contact the Services Contracts Branch (363-5088) and give us the requested information. The vendor will be contacted and should arrive within the next three (3) working days, if not, give us another call. In some cases, you may be authorized to contact the contractor directly. In **all** cases, read your copy of the contract for the maintenance, normally a Standard Form 1449. Specific instructions and authorizations will be included in the schedule or statement of work.

If the item in need of repair is not covered under a maintenance agreement, the next thing you must do determine if the repair can be made utilizing the Government wide Purchase Card (GPC). Things to consider are as follows:

Is the cost of the repair under the micropurchase threshold (\$2,500)? If yes, does the vendor accept the GPC? If both these questions are yes, use the GPC to have the item repaired. If the cost is under the micropurchase threshold, but the vendor does not accept the GPC, locate a vendor that will accept the GPC. If that is not possible, contact the Base Support Flight at 3-5088 for additional assistance.

If the cost of the item is in excess of the micropurchase threshold (\$2,500), but not above \$25,000 AND is available on a GSA or other prepriced contracting instrument, contact the GPC Program Office (3-2852 or 2-0623) for assistance.

If neither of the above options is available to you, contact the 61 CONS at 3-5088 for assistance. If you have to purchase this service through Contracting, be prepared to submit a funded AF Form 9, Request for Purchase and any accompanying documentation. As a minimum, the Form 9 must contain a detailed description of what you want, when you want it done, where the service is to be performed, and whether the contractor will be required to do the work on-site. If applicable, don't forget to include: (a) the maximum repair allowance, (b) warranty start/stop dates, and (c) acquisition date and original cost. NOTE: Your AF Form 9 must be funded by Accounting and Finance (Commercial Services) before we will accept it.

For any additional assistance on this topic, contact Ms. Audrey Campbell at 3-5088.

### EMERGENCY CONTRACTING SUPPORT

Consider this scenario. "Its 10 P.M., and after putting in several hours of overtime, you are going through your facility to ensure it is secure. During your walk-through you discover that a water line has broken and water is rapidly spreading through the building. You can't find a shut-off valve and now Government equipment is in danger of being damaged. During the course of the confusion it is determined that the Government does not have in-house capability to resolve the problem." Do you know who should be contacted and how to contact the fight person to assist you? Unfortunately, this type of scenario is all too common. But fear not, we in the 61<sup>st</sup> CONS

stand ready to assist you with your every need, even after normal duty hours and on weekends. Should you require after hours assistance, please contact the Los AngelesAFB Command Post at (310) 363-2353. The Command Post will have a list of Contracting individuals that may be called at any time their assistance may be required. Remember, we are standing by to assist you. HELP IS ONLY A PHONE CALL AWAY!!

### NON-AUTOMATED CUSTOMER FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES

After what seems like endless red tape, you're finally received notification that your equipment or supplies were ordered or the repairs you need have been arranged and should be delivered or repaired in 5 days. On the anointed day, and everyday thereafter, your expected delivery or repairman fails to materialize. What should you do? Who has dropped the ball? Surely 61<sup>st</sup> CONS knows about this and is following up to correct the situation!!

Nothing could be as far from the reality of the situation!! Because of the sheer volume of requests processed, solicited and awarded, the Operational Contracting staff does not automatically perform follow-up of delinquent deliveries or services. Follow-up of simplified acquisition requirements (\$100,000 and less) is done by exception. This means unless the requester contacts us to inform us of the situation, we assume the vendor had made delivery or performed as promised and all has gone as planned.

If your request was processed through base supply or another of our automated customers, they will initiate the required follow-up request. However, all non-automated customers must contact this office to report delinquency in contractor performance. Failure to perform services should be reported to the contracting office after two duty days, delinquent deliveries after six calendar days.

It is your responsibility to inform us so that we can document the files of those who do not perform as promised. Past contractor performance is an important element of the decision of which of the thousands of vendors to make an award to. The quality of our goods and services directly correlates to the quality of our vendors. Habitually delinquent vendors are coded as such and may stricken from our database.

You are the most important element of this tracking and reporting system. Your cooperation helps you to receive the goods and services that your organization needs in a timely and efficient manner. Should you have any questions, contact us (310) 363-0284.

### Quality Assurance Evaluation Program

The Quality Assurance (QA) Program is a formally organized way of observing the contractor's performance and assuring quality. The Quality Assurance Personnel (QAP) is the "eyes and ears of the contracting officer. They report regularly on their observations of the contractor's performance and the contracting officer relies on these reports when deciding how to deal with substandard performance. Despite many misconceptions of his/her role, the QAP does not control quality, that is the contractor's responsibility. Most contractors accomplish this with a supervisory structure and an acceptable quality control plan. In a nutshell, the QAP's function is to sample performance, identify trends, and report to the contracting officer.

No matter how talented our QA personnel, they cannot be in all places at the same time, so you are also very important in assuring the Government receives quality. Should you notice what you believe to be deficient contractor performance, you should notify your building manager, if known or Civil Engineering. The building manager has received instruction on what to do should the contractor's performance be suspect. Under no circumstance should you, the building manager, or the QAP for that matter, give direction to the contractor or its employees. The QAP, more than any other person, is frequently in contact with the contractor and the contractor's employees. As such, the QAP possesses "apparent authority" to represent the Government to the contractor. The fact is, however, a QAP has only that limited authority which is delegated by the contracting officer, and, conversely, unless you are a QAP or contracting officer, you have none. Resist the temptation to try and direct the contractor based solely on your personal interpretation of the contract; work as a team with your building manager and QAP.

Should you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact Ms. Julia Silvas, the QA Program Coordinator, at 363-5077 or the 61 CONS at 3-0284.

### PURCHASE FURNITURE

Are you in the market for some furniture? Decided what kind you want?...Systems, modular, or stand-alone? Figured out where you go to order it? Base Supply or Contracting? Well, no matter what your answers to the above questions are, unless you receive a waiver from Federal Prison Industries, Inc. (UNICOR), you must purchase your furniture requirements from UNICOR. The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) subpart 8.6, makes UNICOR the mandatory preference for supplies listed in its "Schedule of Products. Catalogs detailing UNICOR's products are available for research at Base Supply or via the internet at [www.unicor.gov](http://www.unicor.gov).

If after careful review, you, in all sincerity, determine nothing in UNICOR's product line will meet your specific requirements, you must obtain a waiver from UNICOR prior to submission of your purchase request to 61<sup>st</sup> CONS. UNICOR will consider requests for waivers based on:

- Documented disparities in price
- Inability to meet reasonable delivery dates, and
- Disqualifying variations in function and "match."

Waiver requests are submitted UNICOR's Customer Service Center in Lexington, KY. by mail or various means of electronic transmission. Each waiver request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis by one of its regional Marketing Consultants here in California. Systems furniture waivers are handled by the Systems Project Group located in Washington, DC. More information on waiver request procedures is available from 61 CONS at 3-5088.

Any purchase request received in 61<sup>st</sup> CONS to purchase from a source other than UNICOR items listed in UNICOR's "Schedule of Products" must be accompanied by the required waiver. Any request not adhering to this policy will be returned to the originator.

Oh, by the way!!.. To answer some of the above questions. If you want to order stand alone furniture, you order it directly from 61 CONS either using the Government-wide Purchase Card or AF Form 9, Request for Purchase. Systems and modular type furniture is ordered procured in the same manner, via either the GPC or AF Form 9.

### 61 CONS WEB PAGE

Ever increasing levels of customer service is our goal. To better serve you, we have constructed a page on the SMC web site. Visit this location to gain immediate access to a number of our documents and publications. Currently available are our *Customer Guide*, *Blanket Purchase Agreement Training Guide*, our quarterly newsletter, *Making it Happen*, and *UNICOR Waiver*, which provides information and instructions on how to obtain a waiver to the mandatory use of UNICOR products. We will add more information to the location as it becomes available. Any suggestions for improvement should be submitted to Mark Alexander @ 3-0461.

The Operational Contracting Web Page is located at:

[www.losangeles.af.mil/ABG/cons/61cons.htm](http://www.losangeles.af.mil/ABG/cons/61cons.htm)

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